YARD & GARDEN NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2015

Wait, Wait, it’s Not Too Late to Plant!

Joyce Wilcox, Nicollet County Master Gardener

Wait, wait, it’s not too late to plant! It’s been a cool wet May. Some gardeners might be thinking that it is too wet and too late to plant those favorite vegetables.

Not necessarily. There is still time, until about June 15th, to plant a vegetable garden and expect reasonable success. Outcome will depend on plant choice and the weather forecast. Many garden centers still have an inventory of vegetable plants that are healthy and in need of a good home. At this point in the growing season it is important to choose shorter season varieties.

Sixty-five day tomatoes and peppers are a good choice. Check the plant labels. Cucumbers, beans, and leafy greens can still produce a full crop. The key to success is to plant and soon as possible and to keep weed competition at a minimum. Sunny days and warm nights will promote good growth and a good harvest. Since we can’t control weather, plant choice and timing are the only factors we can control.

Remember to fertilize and water regularly. Tomatoes need about one inch of water per week. If Mother Nature decides to turn off the moisture hand watering will become necessary. Watering needs to be consistent. Water plants from the base and early in the day. This practice will curb fungal and foliar disease problems. Check plants regularly for disease and treat with environmentally friendly products at the first sign of problems. Garden centers have a good selection of fungicide products if they become necessary.

Annual flowers can still be planted with success. Many garden centers are offering “buy one, get one” deals at this point. Take advantage. Healthy plants will still flourish and brighten your home landscape. Water and fertilizer are an important part of making these plants thrive. Petunias are always a beautiful addition to the backyard. It is important to remember that they are heavy feeders and need to be fertilized about every 14 days.

Dead heading and “haircuts” are a necessary part of flower care. Spent flower heads need to be snipped back to the plant stem or the next set of leaflets. Failure to deadhead will result in limited flower production after the first full flush of flowers.

The season for planting “cool crop” greens like lettuce and peas is probably passed. But many gardeners have had great success planting these vegetables mid-August.

The Minnesota gardening season is relatively short. Make the best of it.

Enjoy those tomatoes!
**Growing with Grace Community Garden**

Located in Mankato across from Meyers & Son on Broad and Mulberry Streets

11’x11x and 12’x6’ plots available to purchase for $30 and $20.

Details can be found at [www.gracemankato.org](http://www.gracemankato.org)  
Or call: 507-345-4248.

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**THE FUNGUS AMONG US...... OR WHY-O-WHY FUNGI??**

*Diane K. DeWitte  
Extension Educator- Ag Production Systems*

Several of our latest horticulture calls in the office this month have been related to fungus---actually fungi, and I'm not talking about those delicious mushrooms for which we forage!

We have seen cases of Ash tree Anthracnose in the past couple of weeks. Anthracnose is a fungus which affects many different trees, but Ash are especially susceptible. The tree will "rain" leaves, and those affected leaves are curled and cupped with a brown spot at the cupped edge. Anthracnose is not a killer of established trees, but, as with all fungus strikes, cleaning up the downed leaves and disposing of them helps remove spores.

You can learn more about Anthracnose from UMN Extension at this site: [http://www.extension.umn.edu/garden/yard-garden/trees-shrubs/anthracnose/](http://www.extension.umn.edu/garden/yard-garden/trees-shrubs/anthracnose/)

Recently we have seen more incidences of Powdery Mildew on peonies. Again, this is a specific fungus which may or may not show itself, depending on the weather conditions. This mildew will look like flour on the leaves, and is not a killer of the plant. It can be triggered by wet conditions or poor air circulation. Peonies in a shaded area, or those which have gotten very thick are more commonly struck with powdery mildew. Divide them or move them to a sunny spot where they get good air circulation. Sanitation is important again---remove the infected plant parts and dispose of them.

More information is available from our UMN Extension horticulture team: [http://blog-yard-garden-news.extension.umn.edu/2012/08/powdery-mildew-on-peonies.html](http://blog-yard-garden-news.extension.umn.edu/2012/08/powdery-mildew-on-peonies.html)

In the livestock world we preach about biosecurity, and I'm a big proponent of biosecurity in the garden, too. Remove and dispose of infected or damaged plants and plant parts to keep the health of your lawn and garden as disease-free as possible!